KINGSTON CARERS NETWORK



Annual Review

2025-2026











Cover image by Laura Mann, winner of our 'What caring means to you' cover design competition.

About us

Kingston Carers Network (KCN) is an independent charity providing information, advice, advocacy and support to unpaid carers of all ages who are caring for someone with an illness, disability or substance misuse problem.

Our vision

A future where unpaid carers are recognised, valued, and enabled to live and care well.

Our mission

We provide tailored information, advice and support to unpaid carers, advocating for strengthened local services that better meet their needs.

Our values

Compassion

We bring an empathetic and caring approach to our work and ensure that carers are treated with compassion and care by others.

Authenticity

We stand with carers and use our independence and lived experience to challenge injustice and champion carers' rights.

Representation

We are proactive in putting unpaid carers at the heart of our decision-making so that carers' diverse perspectives are seen, heard and shape our services.

Expertise

We recognise carers as experts in their loved ones' needs, bringing innovation to our services through co-production and listening and learning from feedback.

Relationships

We build and strengthen peer support and community among carers and proactively create partnerships across the wider care system.

Message from the CEO



At KCN we believe that no one should feel they are caring alone. Providing care to someone you love should be matched with recognition and compassion from the community that surrounds you. Above all, it should be matched with appropriate support, so that you can live and care well. This is what drives KCN's work, and which you will hopefully see reflected in this year's review.

2025/26 was very much focused on embracing the new. We published a new organisational strategy, setting out refreshed commitments to unpaid carers and ambitions to scale our work to meet the growing demand on our services. We launched a new brand identity, aimed at reflecting the care and compassion that defines our work and helping us reach more carers in the community. We also developed new partnerships, as well as piloted new ways for supporters to engage with our work.

However, amidst all this change, the quality of our services to carers remained a constant, with over 1,800 carers receiving direct, personalised and holistic support throughout the year.

During the year we were proud to see our work recognised both nationally and locally. KCN was named a Big Issue Changemaker, one of a hundred organisations across the country recognised for their work driving positive change in their communities. At the Kingston Celebrating Communities Awards 2025, long-standing volunteer John Mays received the Lifetime Achievement Award, while Jake Garside was named Young Volunteer of the Year. Jake has been part of the Young Carers Project since 2012 and more recently started volunteering at our youth groups, giving back to the service that supported him.

Whilst the year has given us much to celebrate, we have equally faced numerous challenges. Rising operational costs and a tougher funding environment forced us to scale back some of our services to carers. Rising demand and the increasing complexity of carers' needs continue to place pressures on the timeliness of support we are able to provide.

Our new strategy sets out our commitment to address these challenges but is very clear on one thing: the need for a system-wide response to unpaid care in the community. Unpaid carers need and deserve so much more, but the response needs to be one that comes from partners working together and adequate investment that truly recognises and supports unpaid carers as equal partners in care.

I remain incredibly grateful and thankful to the staff, volunteers, trustees and members who make up our network, and who continue to bring their expertise, passion and commitment to our cause. They are our strength and my inspiration.

Rachael Stokes

Adult Carers

Caring can affect every aspect of life, from health and wellbeing to relationships, work and finances. During the year, our Adult Carers Team continued to see carers at risk of burnout, alongside increasingly complex caring situations and carers presenting with their own health and wellbeing needs.

In response, we provided practical, emotional and financial support, from statutory Carer's Assessments and specialist benefits advice to counselling, mental health peer support, support groups and opportunities to take a break from caring.

Our year at a glance

During 2025/26 KCN received 1,097 referrals to the adult carers service and provided direct support to 1,838 carers through the following:

- 328 statutory Carers Assessments and reviews
- £221,601 additional income secured through benefits support
- £292,909 distributed in discretionary payments, grants and relief care hours
- 351 counselling sessions
- 470 engagements in wellbeing activities
- 96 support group meetings, with 1,057 total carer engagements

Highlights from the year included the following:

1. **Helping carers sustain their caring role**

We continued to support carers to sustain their caring role and maintain their own health and wellbeing through Carer's Assessments carried out on behalf of Kingston Council. These give carers dedicated time to discuss how caring affects their lives and develop a personalised plan alongside our team.

This year, assessments unlocked £514,510 in total support through relief care hours, grants and discretionary payments, enabling carers to take much-needed breaks, meet essential costs and spend on their own wellbeing in ways they might otherwise go without.



2. Fostering connection

Carers connected, took time away from caring and maintained interests outside their caring role through tailored support groups, including lunches for dementia carers and regular bowling meet-ups for male carers, alongside trips and other wellbeing activities.

Highlights included a ten-week yoga course supported by the Hillery Family Foundation, and the Heart of Care project, where carers worked with Rosetta Life to explore their experiences through poetry and films that launched at the Kingston 2025 Festival.

We also took our support into the community at events such as Better Bones Day, Kingston College's Freshers' Fair and outreach stands at Tolworth Hospital - often connecting for the first time with people learning that they might be a carer.

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3. Protecting carers' financial security

Welfare reform continued to create challenges for carers, particularly the move from legacy benefits to Universal Credit. Our Benefits Service saw increased demand and complexity, including challenging benefit decisions, Carer's Allowance overpayments and a rise in face-to-face tribunals.

As our three-year Trust for London-funded project concluded, it had supported 346 carers through 3,001 contacts and secured £841,321 in financial gains for carers and the people they care for. 92% of carers surveyed felt more confident about getting the benefits they were entitled to, while 96% were satisfied with the support received.

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4. Supporting mental health and wellbeing

Our free counselling service, delivered with Kingston College, provided 351 sessions during the year – around £21,060 in equivalent session value for carers. Our volunteer counsellors tailor their approach for carers, helping them work through feelings such as guilt, grief and anxiety.

Among a sample of carers who used our counselling service and completed outcome measures, depression scores improved by 67%

88% of carers using our peer support service showed improvements across all measured outcome areas

We also continued our Mental Health Peer Support Service with South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust and Kingston Mind, providing one-to-one and group support from a peer worker with lived experience.

"You gave me a wealth of good advice, which is so valuable to help me at this stressful time. Your positive energy has given me more confidence to tackle the caring and financial issues ahead."

"I have received confirmation that X will receive PIP at the enhanced rate! We couldn't have done it without your help and advice and wanted to say a massive thank you."

"I feel like a very different person to the one who entered the building all those weeks ago! Yay!"

"Thank you for all your amazing help, it is giving me the support I needed to be able to access resources and feel calmer about the situation."



Carer Stories

Carer's Allowance overpayment

A carer balancing caring responsibilities with three part-time jobs was faced with an alleged £5,757 overpayment of Carer's Allowance.

Our Benefits Service reviewed the complex earnings calculations and identified that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had not applied its own guidance correctly. We challenged the calculation with the DWP, setting out the relevant guidance and requesting a reassessment, and then supported the carer through the appeals process. The alleged overpayment was subsequently reduced to £286.



Mental health peer support

W is the sole carer for her two neurodivergent children and was struggling with anxiety, low confidence and the impact of previous trauma. Through our Mental Health Peer Support Service, she was given a safe space to reflect and was supported to identify small steps to improve her wellbeing. She began walking mindfully, reading again, cooking healthy meals, doing arts and crafts with her daughter and engaging with local activities.

W also became an Expert by Experience for the Kingston Autism & ADHD Strategy and received support around her son's benefits tribunal. She described feeling like "a very different person" and said: "Diana has been phenomenal and instrumental in helping me find my way again."

Practical and financial support

C is the sole carer for her elderly and disabled mother while also managing her own disability and caring for two young children. She was experiencing significant financial difficulties and had accumulated debt. When both her cooker and washing machine broke beyond repair, she was unable to prepare meals at home and was having to rely on takeaway food, creating further financial pressure.

Following her Carer's Assessment, KCN supported Carer C to identify and submit applications to the Household Support Fund and Carers Trust Grant. Both applications were successful, securing funding for replacement appliances. She was also awarded a £200 discretionary payment to enable her to take some time for herself and pursue a wellbeing activity, alongside ongoing support to identify longer-term debt advice, advocacy and other local and statutory support.



Carer's Assessment

G, aged 79, cares for his wife who has dementia and requires significant daily support. His caring role had led him to stop his voluntary work and significantly reduced his social contact, while he also had his own health needs to manage.

Following his assessment, 72 relief care hours were commissioned, enabling him to attend his own health appointments without rushing home and begin returning to voluntary and community activities. He was also linked with dementia support, social prescribing and practical help with household tasks. The assessment identified a range of support to help G manage his caring role alongside his own wellbeing and interests.

Young Carers

Young carers can take on significant responsibilities at home while managing the same pressures as other children and young people.

As with our Adult Carers Team, this year we saw growing demand alongside increasingly complex caring situations. Many young carers are supporting family members with a range of physical and mental health conditions and other challenges, while also experiencing anxiety and isolation themselves.

In response, we provided regular activities, youth clubs, family support and mentoring, while adapting our approach to meet young carers' changing needs.

Our year at a glance

- 833 young carers directly supported
- 113 new young carer referrals
- 140 engagement opportunities
- 62 holiday respite activities
- 60 weekly Resilience and Peer Support (RAPS) and youth club sessions
- 92 young carers received targeted family support
- 268 hours of mentoring for 12 young carers

Highlights from the year include the following:

1. **Creating opportunities beyond caring**

Throughout the year, young carers had regular opportunities to take a break from caring, spend time with others who understand their experiences, and simply enjoy being young. Weekly Resilience and Peer Support (RAPS) and youth club sessions were complemented by holiday respite activities such as ice skating, cinema trips and watersports.

100% **of young carers accessing our services reported feeling less isolated**

99% **of young carers reported increased wellbeing, improved self-confidence and resilience**

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2. **Responding to young carers' changing needs**

As demand and complexity increased, we adapted our support to reach young carers who needed something different from our established groups and activities. A new Transition Group supported more than 60 young carers in Years 6 and 7, helping them share worries, build confidence and support one another through the move to secondary school.

We also piloted one-to-one counselling for young carers needing more intensive emotional support and agreed a plan with Achieving for Children, Kingston's provider of children's social care and education services, to provide dedicated support for young carers with additional needs.

Meanwhile, a new monthly Sky Café club in Chessington created an accessible space for young carers and their families, with access to food and essentials through the Community Fridge, helping ease pressure on household budgets.

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3. Helping young carers find their voice

Young carers had opportunities throughout the year to express themselves, develop their confidence and share their experiences with wider audiences. At the Rose Theatre, they worked with Create Charity to write and perform their own music, culminating in a live performance for friends and family.

Our Safe Space exhibition at the Penny School Gallery showcased young carers' artwork, while work with Rosetta Life connected young carers in Kingston, Plymouth and South Africa using poetry, film and music.







We also worked alongside author and illustrator Ana Graça, who developed the children's book Young Carers in Space through interactive workshops with our young carers. "When the book launched, I remember I was really excited, because no one ever puts us in books," said Victoria, aged 12.

Beyond these creative projects, young carers' voices also reached national audiences, with two young carers interviewed live on Magic Radio as part of its Caring for Young Carers appeal.

4. Reaching and identifying young carers earlier



Identifying young carers early is vital to connecting them with the support they need. We continued to build our presence in schools across 18 lunch and breakfast club sessions, helping young people recognise their caring role and know where to turn for support. Community outreach also played an important role: our presence at WellFest 2025 helped identify new young carers and connect them and their families with support.

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5. Supporting young carers as they transition to adulthood

Young adulthood is a critical period for all young people, but for young adult carers, balancing the search for independence with continuing expectations of care can be especially challenging. Our Young Adult Carers Group helps 16–25-year-old carers bridge this gap and connect with others who understand what they are going through.

This year, we supported a cohort of 24 young adult carers across 20 bi-monthly sessions, delivering activities and outings tailored for this age range, including meals out, cinema trips, bowling, CV support, quiz nights and board game evenings. Feedback from those attending highlighted the value of the group in reducing feelings of isolation, providing time for themselves and developing supportive friendships.



"You make the real me come out and be happy again."

"I feel more free and energised. It feels like I have a break. I like being able to see everyone. Everyone's really nice, helpful and supportive because they're young carers."

"I'm not very confident and I've only been ice skating once because we can't afford it. Today when I fell over everyone came and checked on me which made me feel special. I love being here. Thank you to the Young Carers Project for giving me these opportunities."

"There is always great advice from everyone at the Young Adult Carers Group when I need it and I have got to meet new people which has resulted in good friends."

"Thank you for always supporting us and more so helping me parent my children. As you know, family has never been there and I isolate as much as possible. So, it really does mean the world to me having you all in our lives."



Young Carer Stories

Z's story

Z is six and helps care for several members of her family who have physical and mental health needs. Following threats of gang violence, her family relocated to Kingston and faced significant challenges, including financial hardship and unsuitable housing.

Z was referred to the Young Carers Project by her primary school and began attending weekly resilience and peer support sessions and holiday activities. This gave her the chance to build confidence, make friends and enjoy positive experiences outside her caring role. We also helped the family access carers' services, specialist equipment and £250 in supermarket vouchers for essential household items.

Z's mum told us that she "adores" the sessions and looks forward to them every week. The family said the practical support made a "real difference" during a difficult time.

J's story

J is 10 and helps care for her brother, who has a visual impairment alongside other complex needs. She helps keep him safe, including guiding him through spaces and providing emotional support during difficult moments. Her caring responsibilities meant she often felt isolated and as if she was missing out.

Through respite activities, peer support and regular support from the Young Carers Project, J built friendships with other young carers and grew in confidence. She began to see her caring role as a strength rather than something to hide.

Since then, J has won a school storytelling competition, taken part in a Magic Radio interview and shared her story at our Annual General Meeting.



Volunteering

Volunteers are an essential part of KCN, giving their time, skills and experience to support carers across our services. From preparing meals for young carers at group activities to being the first voice a carer might hear when they call our office, they provide practical support, a listening ear and a warm welcome to carers across Kingston.

This year, we continued to invest in making volunteering a positive and rewarding experience, while creating opportunities for people to use their skills and lived experience to make a difference.

Our year at a glance

- 83 active volunteers
- 4,403 volunteer hours contributed
- 17 services, activities, groups and projects supported
- 351 free one-hour counselling sessions to carers, representing a session value of £21,060
- 84 one-to-one mentoring sessions delivered by volunteers, providing dedicated support and guidance to our young carers.
- £65,157 worth of volunteer time (based on London Living Wage)

Highlights from the year include the following:

1. **Making a difference across KCN**

Our volunteers supported carers in many different ways throughout the year. They helped run groups and activities, answered incoming calls from carers, provided administrative, website and social media support, and contributed to KCN's governance as trustees.

Some volunteers provided more sustained one-to-one support. Through our ongoing partnership with Kingston College, volunteer counsellors offered a free one-to-one counselling service to carers. Our one-to-one mentoring scheme was another important part of their contribution, giving carers regular support and opportunities to get out, take part in activities and build confidence.

72% **of our volunteers have been with us for over three years**

44% **of our volunteers give their time once a week or more**

Together, our volunteers vastly expanded our reach and what we would otherwise have been able to offer carers across Kingston.

2. Sharing skills and experience

Our volunteers bring a rich range of professional expertise and skills. Peter drew on his background in advertising and employment support to deliver more than 22 one-to-one sessions with young and adult carers, helping them develop their CVs and prepare for interviews.

Feedback from those who worked with Peter was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting increased confidence and a better understanding of how to present their skills and experience to potential employers.

We also benefited from skilled volunteering through Link UP London. Designer Caitlin Smith contributed more than 60 pro bono hours to KCN's rebrand and new logo, representing an investment of £9,900 and helping create a brand that better reflects our mission, values and community.

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3. A rewarding place to volunteer

Volunteering is about what people contribute to KCN, but also what they gain from being part of our community.

100% of our volunteers would recommend volunteering with us

100% of our volunteers feel welcomed, vaued and respected

We celebrated that contribution during Volunteers' Week in June 2025 with a volunteer dinner at Searchlight Community Centre, bringing people together and giving us an opportunity to thank them for everything they bring to KCN.

In a lovely reversal of roles, young carers cooked, served the meal and waited on our volunteers for the evening. Every volunteer also left with a homemade fridge magnet, painted by our young carers.





“As a young carer myself, I met amazing volunteers offering their free time to provide many fun events. Now being a trustee, I am able to give my time back to support young carers and also, it has allowed me to gain more experience in finance, governance and confidence building.”

"Volunteering contributes to me keeping faith in human beings. It is important to be reminded and see the positive impacts of helping one another. I appreciate also the lovely social opportunities of meeting with people, and I gained confidence and skills that I would probably not have developed otherwise (like cooking for 30+ people!).”

"This is the best charity I have volunteered for in terms of support.”



Volunteer Stories

Amanda's story

Amanda has volunteered with KCN for more than nine years and is a much-loved part of the Young Carers Project. Alongside helping the team in an administrative capacity, she regularly supports holiday activities and peer support drop-ins for young carers, preparing meals, and helping facilitate crafts and one-to-one activities.

Amanda has built strong bonds with the young carers, who light up when they see her and look forward to her each week. Colleagues describe her as "a wizard who appears exactly when needed", "fairy dust" and say that if artificial intelligence ever learns to replicate people, Amanda should be the blueprint because the world would be a better place! Amanda recently received a Highly Commended Award at Kingston Celebrating Communities Awards for her contribution to our team.

This year alone, Amanda volunteered an incredible 383 hours of her time. That's the equivalent of over 10 weeks of full-time work - an amazing contribution!

Chris's story

Chris has volunteered as a mentor for more than a year, supporting a 14-year-old young carer who helps care for his mother, who lives with a rare condition. Together they have taken part in activities including rock climbing, mountain biking and gym sessions, while also developing independent travel skills.

His young carer's mother described Chris as "much more than a mentor", adding that her son "would see him every single day if he could."





Strengthening the System for Carers

Supporting individual carers is only part of our role. We also work with local and national partners to make sure carers are recognised, heard and better supported across the wider health, care and community system.

This year we continued to work closely with our statutory partners, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Council, Achieving for Children and the local NHS to deliver our core services to young and adult carers. We also continued to co-chair the All Age Kingston Carers Board, bringing together carers and organisations across health, social care and the voluntary sector to address local priorities.

Highlights from the year include the following:

1. **Improving how carers are identified and supported**

A significant focus this year was improving the identification of carers before they reach crisis point. Through the South West London Accelerated Reform Fund, we began developing two dedicated programmes of work focused on improving the identification of young carers in schools and unpaid carers in healthcare settings, particularly primary care.

For young carers, this work builds on the new 'No Wrong Doors' Memorandum of Understanding, which we developed with partners across Kingston and launched during Carers Week 2025. The agreement commits services to working together to identify and support young carers through a systems-wide approach, based on the principle that young carers and their families should not be turned away or simply redirected when they approach a service for help.



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2. **Bringing carers and decision-makers together**

Throughout the year, our support groups provided valuable routes for carers to speak directly to the people responsible for the services they use. Our Dementia Carers Group, for example, welcomed Kingston Council's Director of Adult Social Care, Sam Morrison, and Older People's Commissioner, Charlotte White, for an afternoon tea, giving carers an opportunity to share their experiences and help inform local priorities.



Our Mental Health Carers Support Group also connected carers with a broad range of professionals from South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust at sessions across the year, with discussion topics including Mental Health Act reform, carer involvement, medication and proposed changes to services.

We also brought carers' experiences into wider local decision-making. In October 2025, KCN presented to Kingston's Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel at a dedicated meeting on carers, highlighting the needs and challenges carers are experiencing across the borough.

Building stronger partnerships

3. We continued to represent carers across local health, care and voluntary-sector partnerships, including the South West London NHS Kingston Place Committee, South West London VCSE Alliance, Kingston Partnership Board, Kingston Hospital Carers Clinical Liaison Steering Group and South West London and St George's Families and Carers Reference Group. We also remained actively involved in Kingston Voluntary Action's CEO network and VCSE Forum.

During the year, we helped develop and launch the new Kingston Compact, strengthening how the local authority, NHS and voluntary and community sector work together.

Influencing change nationally

4. Alongside our local work, we made sure carers' experiences in Kingston contributed to national conversations about policy and support.



In November 2025, KCN was one of six carers centres invited to take part in the Casey Commission's first evidence session, alongside Carers Trust and Carers UK. This gave us an opportunity to bring the experiences and challenges facing unpaid carers into a national discussion about the future of adult social care.

We also supported carers to take part in Carers Trust's national 'Protest at Home' campaign, which highlighted carers' experiences of accessing breaks and respite. KCN joined other organisations in signing national open letters on issues affecting carers, including Carer's Allowance overpayments and proposed welfare reforms.



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5. Funding partnerships

Strong funding partnerships continued to underpin our work during the year. We secured a contract from Achieving for Children to continue delivering Kingston's young carers service, alongside funding from the Shaftesbury Young People's Trust for transition support and the National Lottery Community Fund for our work with young carers in schools. New funding from City Bridge Foundation supported our work with male carers and suicide prevention.

We developed community funding partnerships too, including with New Malden Golf Club, which selected KCN as its club charity for the next five years, alongside support from Hilary Lopez through Goldman Sachs Giving.

We also took part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge, our first ever individual giving campaign. With donations from our supporters generously matched by the Shanly Foundation, we exceeded our target and raised an incredible £11,000.

Finance and resources

Our financial position at March 2026 was in a much healthier position than the previous year owing to successful fundraising efforts and actions taken to reduce our operating costs. We ended the year with a moderate surplus of £33,000, enabling us to rebuild our unrestricted reserves.

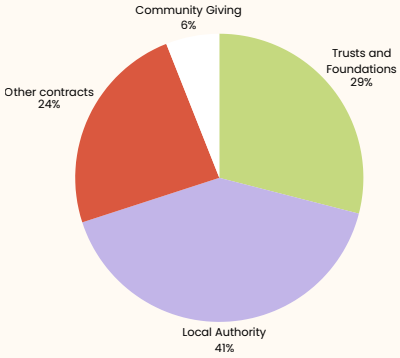
Our core adult carers services contract with Kingston Council provided 41% of our total income in 25/26, with the remainder coming from the following sources: Trusts and Foundations (29%), Community partnerships (3%), individual donations, including legacies (3%), and other contracts (24%).

We thank the Garfield Weston Foundation, National Lottery Community Fund, Jack Petchey Foundation, Henry Smith Foundation, Mercers Foundation, Goldman Sachs Giving, Trust for London, Shaftesbury Young People's Trust and the City Bridge Foundation for their support in 25/26.

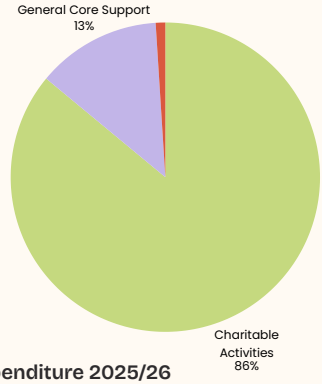
We are also grateful for the generous financial and in-kind support we receive from our many community partners across the Borough. We would like to extend our thanks to the following for their support during the year:

- Co-op Local Community Fund
- Cash for Kids
- Chelsea FC Foundation
- Kingston Horticultural Society
- Nephthys Illustrated
- New Malden Golf Club
- Odeon Cinema
- Ristorante Sorrento

The Board regularly reviews the financial outlook for the organisation, both for the current year and also the medium term position. We are well aware of the financial pressures facing the charitable sector generally, and of the pressures being felt by some of our core funders, but are confident in our ability to generate the financial support needed for KCN to continue to serve the Kingston community.



Income 2025/26



Expenditure 2025/26

	2025/26			2024/25
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income				
Grants, donations and legacies	165,497	0	165,497	117,827
Investments	5,942	0	5,942	6,996
Charitable activities		607,369	607,369	634,151
Total	**171,439**	**607,369**	**778,808**	**758,974**
Expenditure				
Charitable activities	194,236	539,895	734,131	815,008
Other	11,379	0	11,379	12,270
Total	**205,615**	**539,895**	**745,510**	**827,278**
Net resources before transfers	(34,176)	67,473	33,298	(68,304)
Transfers between funds	57,442	(57,442)	0	0
Net before other gains/losses	23,266	10,031	33,298	(68,304)
Other gains/losses	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds	23,266	10,031	33,298	(68,304)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	151,355	29,875	181,230	249,534
Total funds carried forward	174,621	39,907	214,528	181,230

Message from the Chair



As we close this review, I keep coming back to how rarely caring is the only challenge in someone's life. The carers we meet may also be managing their own ill health, financial pressure, loneliness or difficult circumstances elsewhere in the family. For a young carer, those pressures can sit alongside school, friendships and the ordinary business of growing up. Their needs seldom fit neatly within the boundaries of a single service.

That tells me something important about KCN's role. We must be there for carers when they need individual advice and support, but we must also help schools, healthcare services and others recognise caring earlier and respond more effectively. This year's work to improve how carers are identified is an important step. So, too, was our invitation to join the Casey Commission's first evidence session as one of just six carers' centres. It gave the experiences of carers in Kingston a place in a national conversation about the future of adult social care.

We should be proud of that growing influence, and of the care and expertise our staff and volunteers bring to their work every day. But I also want to end this review with a frank warning. The financial future of KCN cannot be taken for granted. Trusts and foundations are now less likely to fund the core costs on which organisations like ours depend. Nationally, only 1% of adult social care spending is recorded as support to carers. Even with local budgets under pressure, we believe the Royal Borough of Kingston and our NHS partners can do more. We invite them to work with us towards increased, sustained investment in carers, reflecting both the growing complexity of their circumstances and their vital contribution to Kingston's health and care system.

We will need to find a broader range of funding and examine closely what we deliver, how we deliver it and where we can make the greatest difference. Without dependable funding, we cannot assume that every service can continue at its current level. The Board will face these decisions openly, guided by carers' experiences and by our duty to keep KCN strong enough to serve them in the years ahead.

There is reason for hope in the support Kingston has already shown. Our first Big Give Christmas Challenge raised £11,096 for young carers, exceeding its £10,000 target. I am grateful to everyone who donated, helped spread the word or provided match funding. It was a generous response, and a reminder that carers matter to this community, but we are going to need more.

My thanks go to our carers for trusting us, to our staff and volunteers for their commitment, and to every partner and supporter who has stood alongside us. KCN's next chapter will require difficult choices and wider support. I am determined that carers' voices will remain at the heart of both.

Dr Tony Woods

Governance

Kingston Carers Network is a charity registered in England and Wales with the Registered Number 1151456. The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 25 January 2013 and operates in accordance with its written Memorandum and Articles of Association. New Trustees are appointed in accordance with its Articles of Association.

Membership

KCN welcomes individuals and organisations committed to supporting carers locally. Membership is open to carers, representatives of voluntary, private, and statutory organisations, and individuals who share our mission to promote carers' interests.

We are fortunate to have trustees who bring a broad range of expertise to KCN, including finance, health and research, technology, human resources and organisational leadership, alongside lived experience of caring.

All applications are subject to approval by the Board of Directors, who ensure alignment with the charity's values and objectives. Each member, whether an individual or an organisation, is entitled to one vote at general meetings, helping shape the governance and future direction of the charity.

Trustees in 2025/26

Dr Anthony Woods (Chair), Peter Whatnall (Treasurer), Steven Blake, Simon Post, Dawn Whitcombe, Robert Humphries, John Mays, Thea Webster, Courtney Kirkpatrick



KINGSTON CARERS NETWORK



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Volunteering opportunities: volunteering@kingstoncarers.org.uk

Partnership opportunities: ceo@kingstoncarers.org.uk

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